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# FAST SERMON,

IN WHICH

*The real Cause of all Wars and public Calamities  
are explained;*

*The Means by which they may be avoided;*

WHEN THEY WILL CEASE;

AND

*The Manner in which the Inhabitants of Great Britain  
ought to conduct themselves,*

*In the present serious State of this Kingdom.*

AND NOW EARNESTLY RECOMMENDED

To the Perusal of every Description of Mankind;

PARTICULARLY,

*To all Magistrates, Clergymen, Dissenting Ministers,*

AND TRUE PATRIOTS.

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Delivered on the

**PUBLIC FAST DAY,**

MARCH 9, 1796,

*In the New Jerusalem Temple, Birmingham,*

By J. PROUD, N.H.M.

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*Published by the particular Request of the Audience.*

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BIRMINGHAM,

*Printed by James Belcher.*

1796.

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**P R E F A C E.**

**T**HE following Discourse is offered to the perusal of the public in general, from a full conviction that the subjects it contains are of importance to all descriptions of men; and the Author has not only permitted its publication, from the above-named conviction, together with a sincere desire that it may be truly useful, but it also comes forth under the particular request, and the warmest recommendation, of the judicious audience to whom it was delivered; and, it is believed, without a dissentient voice, although the audience was composed of persons of various denominations, and different religious sentiments. And, it is presumed the Discourse will not be found to contain a sentence, or a

sentiment, which serious judicious christians of any party will object to or disapprove.

It is a fact, which cannot now want confirmation, that the nations of Europe, in general, are in states of commotion, disorder, and trouble; and that Great Britain at present labors under very serious and afflictive circumstances; and that judgments still more awful appear to impend over it. For *these calamities* there must exist a CAUSE, and that *cause*, whatever it is, must, either *in part* or *altogether*, be in the PEOPLE who compose the nation. *What* that Cause is, the following Discourse hath attempted to explain; and if it be such as is therein asserted, then it will be found *peculiarly* and *essentially* necessary for the *great*, the *noble*, and the *opulent* part of the community—the *magistrates*, *clergy*, and all religious ministers—to adopt the *means* herein pointed out, that the cause may no longer exist; and that the *threatened judgments*, the *impending calamities*, may be averted and removed from this long highly-favored land. Their *authority* will have weight with the lower orders of men, and their  
*example*



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*example* induce them to imitate their conduct. If *those means* are adopted, and *that work* effected, then there is not the least doubt but Great Britain will escape the judgments of heaven, be a prosperous, united, and happy nation. But if what is recommended be not regarded and attended to, the Author ventures to declare, without any pretensions to prophesy, and uninfluenced by enthusiasm, that heavy calamities, and judgments severe, will assuredly visit this land.

Whether the thoughts suggested, or the advice humbly given, will be *attended to*, he pretends not to say: but he requests that those persons who shall think good to peruse the following pages, will neither suffer *partiality for*, nor *prejudice against*, the *author*, to have the *least influence* upon their minds. TRUTH is TRUTH, whoever *speaks it* or *pens it*, and with a candid judicious mind, it will be of no consequence whether the writer be an *archbishop* or a *country curate*, whether he be of *this church* or *the other*, or whatever rank he holds among mankind. If the subjects are *sea-*

*sonable*, the sentiments *just*, and the advice *good*, the candid mind will read them, and observe them, with no less pleasure and profit, if penned by an obscure individual, than though they were the production of the most dignified character.

The Author, if he knows his own heart, is a *true patriot*, he *loves his country*, *all mankind*, and will ever be happy to contribute towards their *present and future well-being*. *Names, parties, and distinctions*, either of a *political or religious nature*, are no more to him than the different colour or quality of the garments men put on. *All mankind are his brethren*, possess *immortal souls*, are capable of *pleasure and pain, misery and happiness*; and they were all designed by their Creator, as much as himself, to enjoy the blessings of providence in this world, the felicities of his divine favor and kingdom in the world to come.

The grand object, therefore, we all ought to have in view (whatever our particular sentiments or opinions may be) is to *bless and be blessed, to make each other happy,*  
as

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as the children of one divine parent. And until this object is pursued, and such a god-like disposition prevails, we have no reason to expect peace and prosperity; but rather, disorder and infelicity, division and opposition, civil commotions and disturbances at home, war and bloodshed abroad, enemies all around us, and the chastisements of heaven heavy upon us, as a disobedient and ungrateful people.

The judgments of God are now abroad on the earth. May the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness! And may the subjects of Great Britain *repent, reform, unite their hearts and hands to suppress all iniquity, and encourage virtue!* Then will the God of our fathers be *our God*; he will avert our judgments, take us under his protection, bless us as a nation with a continuance of every good, cause us to triumph over all our enemies, and we shall stand the admiration and envy of the world!

2 But until this *important, this happy change* shall take place in our land, the ministering angel of Jehovah's indignation hovers over  
us,

us, with the roll of a book spread forth in his hand, and written within and without, — **LAMENTATIONS, AND MOURNING, AND — "WOE!"** \* \* \* \* \* **Ezek. ii. 9, 10.** — "I will be an enemy and a destroyer, as at home and abroad, and the charnel-houses of heaven heavy upon us, as a deluge of ungrateful people."

The judgments of God are now abroad on the earth. May the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness! And may the subjects of Great Britain repent, reform, unite their hearts and hands to suppress all iniquity, and encourage virtue! Then will the God of our fathers be our God; he will avert our judgments, take us under his protection, bless us as a nation with a continuance of every good, and we shall stand over all our enemies, and we shall stand the admiration and envy of the world!

**FAST** — Until this important, this happy evening shall take place in our land, the ministering angel of Jehovah's indignation hovers over



## FAST SERMON.

JONAH iii. 8, 9, 10.

Let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn, and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?—And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them, and he did it not.

**A**T such a season as the present, when we are called upon by our rulers to observe a solemn *Fast*, and to humble ourselves before Almighty God, it seems necessary that we take into serious consideration the *reasons* why such a fast ought to be observed, and what are the calamities we, as a nation, labor under; or have cause to fear *will* fall upon us.

It is said that we are to *fast*, humble ourselves before God, and pray to him that our armies may be *successful*, that we may subdue the powers against whom we are engaged, and that victory may attend our arms by land and sea.

In

In every *just cause*, when our liberties are in danger, our country invaded, and our lives threatened, it certainly is our duty to look up to the God of heaven for that defence, protection, and success, which the nature of our case may require. How far *this* may be the situation in which we now stand, as a nation, I shall not attempt to decide; but rather leave that for every man to make judgment of for himself.

The subjects to which I request your attention this evening, are the following:—

I. We will consider what are the **REAL CAUSES** of all *wars and public calamities*.

II. By *what means* they are to be avoided, and *when they will cease*.

And, III. In what manner we ought to conduct ourselves, under the present state and situation of this kingdom.

If you will attend to the words of our text, and also to a very considerable part of the sacred pages, you will clearly observe that the **REAL**, but *sad cause*, of all wars and general calamities, *has been, and still is*, no other than *the intolerable wickedness of mankind*. Men were never created by the blessed God, to destroy one another; they were created to live in peace, harmony, and love, as the children of one divine parent; as being all of one origin,

origin, and one family. But ever since INIQUITY (that accursed bane of all human felicity and happiness) has existed in the world, men have cultivated and encouraged *hatred, enmity, pride, self-love*, and every abominable disposition, temper, and lust. The love of the world, a thirst for power, and an insatiate desire for dominion, have prevailed in all ages, and increased with time: and these infernal dispositions and lusts have manifested themselves in open hostilities between man and man, nation and nation; and the human mind has been employed to invent the most speedy and effectual way for murdering each other.

In every age of the world, since Cain (that first horrid fratricide) slew his brother Abel, men have advanced in wickedness, increased in cruelty, and abounded in bloodshed. The history of mankind, as given us in the Bible, is sufficient to convince us how great the abominations of men have been, how much they have been practised in slaughter, how dreadful the punishments they have experienced for their crimes, and how *very little effect* their sufferings, sorrows, and judgments, have had upon them. So far, therefore, is the world from being reclaimed or amended by repeated calamities, and the awful demonstrations of Jehovah's displeasure, that it may be truly said, the inhabitants of Europe, the nations called christian, as well as the other quarters of the globe, are arrived to the very *plus ultra* of wickedness at this day. You need only bring

bring to recollection what you have *seen, heard, and known* of mankind, and you *must* immediately acknowledge how great, how alarming, and how universal, are the vices of this age.

Is it not a fact, which needs no further proof, that from the dignified prince to the poor uncultivated peasant in his cottage, scarcely any thing is seen or heard but pride, luxury, injustice, cruelty, fraud, envy, hatred, and malice; adultery, fornication, lying, swearing, drunkenness, dissipation, sensual pleasures, folly, and intemperance?—Again, bribery, corruption, deceit, duplicity, artifice, subtilty, and cunning?—Are not the greater part of those who move in the more exalted spheres of life, devoted to one constant round of *unsubstantial and unsatisfying amusements*, only suited to the low appetites and affections of corporeal nature? Are the manly virtues, the generous affections, the tender feelings of humanity, and the *solid, rational pleasures of an IMMORTAL MIND, equally cherished and improved*? Are they not *neglected, forgotten, and almost unknown*? Are not the *lowest* classes of men, which are the more numerous, nursed in the lap of ignorance, trained up in the school of vice and profaneness, totally unacquainted with religious principles and moral virtues; taught to encourage, and habituated to the indulgence of the most depraved dispositions, the most profane language, and the most iniquitous lives?

And



And as to what is called the RELIGIOUS WORLD, what do we find there? Why, too generally, the *external appearance* of religion—the *mere shadow*, without the *real substance* of genuine piety and virtue. There are *names, sects, and parties* in great abundance.—They can divide, and subdivide *ad infinitum*:—Their doctrines, sentiments, and opinions, are without number:—They can *talk much*—wrangle and fall out one with another—boast of their different systems—the orthodoxy of their faith, and the superiority of their wisdom. But alas! Where is that PURE LOVE to the true God—DIS-INTERESTED CHARITY TO MAN—and FAITHFUL OBEDIENCE TO DIVINE LAWS, which are so very essential to REAL CHRISTIANITY, UNDEFILED RELIGION!—Where, all that *mercy, pity, kindness, candor, condescension, and benevolence*, which the author of our existence requires us to cultivate;—and which are the *ornaments of the mind*—the *happiness of society*—the *glory and felicity of an immortal being*! These virtues—these divine graces, are fled from the abodes of men, except here and there they find a lonely habitation, within the breast of some humble unobserved christian, in the silent haunts of obscurity.

It is, therefore, a certain fact, that the christian world is, at this day, so fallen, and degenerated from pure religion, genuine virtue, and sound morality, that *sins and abominations* of every kind, and in every degree, universally abound, and threaten the desolation

lation of the earth. And be assured, that these execrable and enormous iniquities, these accumulated sins and transgressions, are the *REAL* and *ONLY* cause of all the *public, national, and general* calamities which *now* exist—are spreading through the nations—and the inhabitants of Great Britain *begin* to feel. Nor can they help looking forward with serious apprehensions of greater ills.

It is from the love of dominion—the love of self—and the love of the world, that all wars, bloodshed, and depredations proceed. And as iniquity will ever be followed by its own proper punishment, so when it becomes *universal*—sets up its infernal empire over nations—and rules with unrivalled power: then the consequence is this, namely, as the *multitude* are under its influence, and every class and description of men subject to its sway, so every man is endeavoring to obtain his own ends—gratify his self-love—promote his ambition by all possible means, without any regard to the safety and happiness of others:—and thus, the unjustifiable methods he makes use of to accomplish his evil intentions, plunge him in trouble, and bring down the highly deserved punishment upon his own head. And as it is with an *individual*, so is it with a body of men, a community, or a nation, when under the influence of evil principles and lusts they are living evil lives, and adopting every possible method to feed their ambition—increase their power—and gratify their self-love.

It

It is plain, therefore, that the true and real cause of all calamities, troubles, and distresses, is no other than *evil*, which darkens the understanding—perverts the judgment—corrupts the affections—and throws all the dispositions, tempers, and passions of the depraved mind into disorder, confusion, and anarchy.

Let it not be imagined, that the eternal Jehovah, who is the *tender*, the *benevolent* father of the human race—*kind* and *good* to all, and desiring the happiness of all—let it not be imagined that HE inflicts judgments and woes upon men—that HE causeth wars, bloodshed, and slaughter to rage on the earth—that HE spreads desolation and distress over nations and kingdoms.—No. HE PERMITS them to take place, as punishments ever attendant upon iniquity and disobedience; nor can it be otherwise, according to the divine order established by his infinite wisdom and goodness, from the foundation of all worlds, and over all intelligent existences. But his *will* is, that the EVILS, the CRIMES, which cause these punishments, should not be committed; and then the punishments would never take place. All order, prosperity, and happiness, can only flow from goodness, virtue, and obedience to the divine will. All disorder, adversity, and misery, can only flow from evil, immorality, and disobedience to the God of heaven. These are truths, eternal as heaven itself:—they have been infallibly demonstrated in all ages of the

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the world to this hour, and will in all ages yet to come.

It will not be my present business, to enter into *particulars* respecting the *state of nations*—the *contending powers*—or the *situation of our own country*. *Political discussions*, seldom, if ever, become the pulpit. Nor do I think myself competent to give any *decided* opinion upon the *affairs of the present day*—the police of this kingdom. All this I shall leave for every one to judge of, according to the information and knowledge they may have acquired.

We are called upon by our Sovereign, and the government, to *Fast and Pray*—to seek the Lord for his mercy and protection, and to implore that he will turn away from us the heavy judgments our sins so loudly call for, and which appear to impend over our heads, as a sinful nation, laden with iniquity.—And I am inclined to believe, that such *deprecation, humility, and fasting*, were never more needful than they are now. But, let me tell you, that fasting and prayer, for *one day*, by the command or requisition of government, however strictly observed, will avail little or nothing towards averting and removing those calamities, we have reason to dread as *VERY NEAR, and VERY HEAVY*.

If



If we, as a nation, would escape *public judgments, awful calamities*, we must, as a nation, do what the inhabitants of *Nineveh* did, when *Jonah* was sent to them by the Lord, to denounce their total overthrow in the space of forty days.—For this people, even from the King himself, down to the lowest and meanest subject of his land, humbled themselves in the dust before God—put on sackcloth, and sat in ashes—they cried mightily unto God—they prayed—they implored his mercy—they begged pardon for their crimes; but this was not ALL they did. For they *forsook their evil ways—turned from the violence which was in their hands—repented most sincerely of all their abominations—relinquished their wickednesses—believed in the word of the Lord their God, and obeyed it in heart and life.* And in consequence of this THOROUGH and SINCERE REFORMATION, their punishments were suspended—their calamities fell not upon them: the Lord remembered them in mercy—extended his compassion towards them—and prosperity, peace, and happiness, succeeded to their dangers and their fears. And be assured, my christian friends, that what was done by those people, *must be done by us, as a people*, if we would avoid the impending storms which now threaten us. Every *rank* and every *class* of men must unite in this reformation. *Princes—Lords—Nobles—Magistrates, and great men—the rich—the learned—the clergy—from the dignified Archbishop, to the country curate—with all dissenting ministers,* must set the example of *true genuine reformation,*

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turning away from all known evil in heart and life, They must become men of *true piety, pure religion, sound morality*; being *temperate, sober, just, benevolent, humane, and righteous*: seeking the glory of that God by whom they live, the real happiness of all their inferiors, as to station and life, and the welfare of the nation to which they belong—the lower classes of men must break off their sins by righteousness, forsake their abominations, their intemperance, lust, adultery, drunkenness, swearing, lying, and profaneness. Thus turning again to the Lord their God *in earnest*, both as to heart and life.

THIS is what men must do—*communities* must do; THIS is what Great Britain must do; yea, THIS is what all ranks and orders in our kingdom must do; or, if they do not, I will take upon me to say, that although a *fast* be appointed and kept *every week*, still no good will be done, no real benefit will be derived from the observance of it; judgments, distresses, and sorrows will nevertheless fall upon us; war, bloodshed, and disorder, will take place—poverty, trouble, and anarchy will abound.

It may be said, “This general reformation cannot be *expected*, the accomplishment of it is *improbable*, if not *impossible*. Evil and confirmed habits are not easily conquered; the affections, dispositions, and passions of the mind are not soon controuled: and so general a change of mind and life cannot be effected in a *few years*, perhaps not in an age.”

To

To this objection, strong as it appears to be, our text gives a *decided answer*. Nineveh was an *exceeding great city*, in which were sixty thousand persons who could not discern between their right hand and their left; consequently, it contained a *vast number* of souls who were capable of reason and judgment—and these of different ranks and orders, as king, princes, nobles, magistrates, clergy; and lower classes. It is equally plain that the inhabitants were *very wicked* too; nevertheless, this *vast multitude of persons*; high and low, and *wicked* as they were, all turned from the evil of their ways, their abominations and sins, even from the king down to the poor pauper, *in less than forty days*!—What was possible *then*, is possible *now*: let the *same steps* be taken, and the *same work* will be done; and in a very little time such a general reformation would manifestly appear, as should both *presage* and *ensure* happiness to our land. The clouds which are gathering round us, the storms which appear ready to shake the nations, would vanish away like a mist before the rising sun; the divine beams of mercy and love cheer our drooping spirits, exhilarate our souls, and the *bulwark*, the *defence* of our kingdom, would not be *encircling waters*, or *numerous fleets*; but the *arms of omnipotence* would surround us, and be our invincible defence.

Then let it not be said this reformation cannot be effected. If our great men, our magistrates, and our clergy will seriously begin the work, warm-

ly recommend it, and vigorously enforce it among the other orders of mankind, it would certainly be done, and the happy consequences would as certainly follow. And is it not much better to begin while we have power and opportunity, than to neglect the important work until our chastisements come, our troubles fall upon us, and we have *no time for repentance*, nor means to escape our deserved calamities?

Until such a reformation shall take place, and the inhabitants of *this*, and other nations, shall return to the true God, and become more religious and moral in *principle and life*, *commotions, wars, public calamities*, and *severe judgments*, will assuredly prevail and abound. This is an indubitable truth; but when *this change is accomplished*, this *happy period arrives*, they *must and will cease*.

Let us then, my christian friends, instead of condemning the *political* conduct of men in high life, reprobating every measure adopted, and deciding upon every act of our superiors, or governors, as though we were the most competent to judge—let us, I say, begin to reform the nation, and lessen its load of sins, by each one for ourselves, seeking, in the most humble and ardent manner, the divine mercy and compassion of the Lord our God—confessing our transgressions before him, lamenting the state and the sins of our fellow men, and most sincerely departing from all that we know

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to be evil in our own hearts and lives. Let us immediately begin to set this good example, and by so doing, if we cannot prevail upon others to imitate us, we shall ensure the divine protection for ourselves—we shall be under his care and defence in the day of public calamity—or, if we fall a sacrifice to the fury and violence of our enemies, we shall arise to the mansions of uninterrupted tranquility and endless happiness in the world to come.

Permit me now to suggest in what manner we ought to conduct ourselves, under the present serious situation and state of the kingdom.

And first, You will do well to consider, that all human affairs are under the particular superintendence and direction of divine providence; that he knows the states of men and of nations, that all things will be ordered for the best, in his infinite wisdom and goodness; and that although the wicked shall not go unpunished, yet every circumstance, however afflictive and adverse, shall ultimately contribute to the welfare and happiness of his faithful servants.

Therefore, be very cautious how you speak of, or condemn, the political measures and proceedings of men: all things are working round to accomplish the purposes of Jehovah. Great events are about to take place, and wonderful will be the changes manifested in this world, and that in a *short period of time*,

2. Let

2. Let me recommend to you all a spirit and temper of candor, mildness, and charity. Consider the imperfections and evils of *your own* hearts, and learn rather to pity others, in the present degenerated state of human nature, than to censure and condemn them. Do all you can, in this season of political dispute, division, opposition, and heat, to abate the fire of *party spirit and disaffection*. Reflect upon the states, the tempers, and the dispositions of mankind, and bear with them in patience. —Do nothing, if you can possibly avoid it, to increase a spirit of enmity, opposition, and hatred; and instead of taking up all your time, employing your thoughts and your tongues, upon the various disasters, troubles, and dangers of the times, devote your hours, your thoughts, and your conversation, to *more important subjects* and considerations. Improve your souls, and improve each other in *virtue, religion, and spiritual attainments*. Turn your minds to your *internal* states, to the cultivation of christian principles, and the well-being of your immortal spirits. By true repentance, forsaking all evil, and living in faithful obedience to the divine laws of Jesus Christ, ensure his approbation, a conscience void of offence, and a certain confidence of enjoying the peaceful kingdom of rest and honor, when this short life, with all its troubles and calamities, are over with you for ever.

3. Permit me to advise, that in this day of  
*evil*

evil and of *danger*, you will act and live in such a manner as to *stand ready*, and be *well prepared* for whatever events may take place, yea, even for death itself. For it is *most certain* that in *this day* dangers of a very serious and imminent kind impend over us; we *may*, and we *must* expect many *severe trials* and *troubles*, a state of disorder, commotion, and distress. And who amongst us may be the most exposed thereto, we cannot tell.—However, *this* we know, that such are the disturbances and commotions which now abound in the nations, that little peace, tranquility, and rest, can be expected: but you *do*, or *may* know, that amidst all these difficulties and distresses, there is a God who governs the universe, superintends human affairs, protects those who trust in him, and who will *support*, *preserve*, and *bless* all his faithful servants. Therefore, instead of placing any dependence on a *partial*, or *general fast*, once in a year; or upon any external ceremonies and observances whatever—be it your care to *trust in and depend upon the Lord*. Adore his name; live a righteous life of *faith*, *charity*, and *obedience to the divine will*. Be men of *peace*, *benevolence*, and *compassion*; and cultivate such a spirit of *good-will*, *tenderness*, and *affection* towards ALL MANKIND as your brethren, that you may at all times be able to suffer almost any calamity and trouble, rather than injure a *fellow-creature*, a *brother*, *much less to take his life, if possible to avoid it*. At the same time be zealous for the welfare of your country, the good of every individual

individual thereof, from the highest to the lowest ; diligent to *ensure its liberties, promote its prosperity,* and *defend it* against the *secret or open* designs of its enemies, at home or abroad. Then may you look forward with unshaken confidence, and well-founded expectation, for the enjoyment of that certain reward, that eternal honor, which all such *noble, generous, and virtuous characters* shall for ever inherit, in the presence and kingdom of their God.

From the sincere desire I feel that my fellow men may take warning in time, and be properly prepared for whatever may come upon them, I cannot conclude this discourse, without giving you my *decided opinion* upon the GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THINGS. As to *particular circumstances of distress*—the *exact time* of their commencement or continuance, I pretend not to determine upon. But it is most evident to me, from the history of nations—the events recorded concerning the Jews—the express prophecies of the holy word—the present state of mankind—and the *very nature and necessity* of things ; that a day of *awful, general, and uncommon calamity is at hand*. And we may expect nothing less than “ Wars, and rumours of wars—nation rising against nation—kingdom against kingdom—famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places \*.” As to confidence in human wisdom—the power of arms—the strength of fleets—

\* Matt. xxiv. 6, 7.



or in numbers of men, is no more than leaning upon a broken reed, and placing confidence in a shadow. Neither let it be imagined, that if certain persons were out of power, and others exalted to their places—that if *this* arrangement were made—*such* men employed—and *these* measures adopted—then *all would be well—prosperity and happiness secured*;—Alas, were all this done, over and over again, according to the different views of different men, the case would still be the same. There must first be a CHANGE in the MINDS of men, and that in a *general* way too, before the grand and desired object can be obtained.

“ For the day of the Lord is come, both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate ; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. He will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity. He will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws” (both of God and man) “ changed the ordinances—broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse (the curse of iniquity) devoured the earth, it is utterly broken down—it is moved exceedingly. The transgression thereof is heavy upon it, and it shall fall and not rise again.\*” These solemn declarations of divine truth, assuredly apply to the nations of the world as

\* Isa. 24.

this day. And certain I am, that these awful judgments and punishments will fall upon the nations. They are already begun;—the avenging sword does not only vibrate over the lands, but it is now executing its dreadful work. And I do take upon me to assert, in the *most positive manner*, that nothing *will or can* prevent the most serious and alarming troubles and sorrows, the most severe judgments and calamities from falling upon the nations, especially the nations of Europe, christian lands; but that they will inevitably take place, and be more severe than imagination can paint; and which, I say, nothing can prevent, unless the inhabitants of those nations do speedily turn from their evil abominations, and God-provoking sins; *by unfeigned repentance, reformation of heart and life, and a sincere obedience to the laws of the true and only Jehovah.*

Men may think as they please, and they may judge as they please upon what I now say; but iniquity will ever be followed by its own proper punishment, and when evil has arisen to the enormous height it is at this day, men must expect that their calamities and punishments will be *as awful and general* as the *enormity and extent* of their crimes. Nor is it possible for them to escape the just retribution, but by a *sincere repentance* and a *general reformation*. And, as at present, we see no signs of such an humble return to God and to **V**irtue, so we have nothing to expect but increasing

ing calamity, sorrow, and trouble, to fall upon us. What I have now asserted, I speak from a full conviction, and with a deep concern for the degenerate, evil state of my fellow creatures, and for their approaching woes.

Would to God that the inhabitants of *THIS LAND*, instead of *disputing, wrangling, and opposing* one another; instead of party feuds, civil dissensions, and partial external reforms, would unite to reform the heart and life, change the love of self for the love of each other, the love of dominion for the love of real usefulness, and the love of every evil for the love of truth and righteousness; and every one in his own sphere, and according to the extent of his power and influence; promote civil order, moral virtue, pure religion, and universal philanthropy! Then would the sword of war be sheathed in its scabbard, famine and pestilence fly from our islands; peace, plenty, and prosperity bless our land; the gifts of divine providence descend upon us in rich abundance, and the God of heaven be our defence, our salvation, and our portion for ever!

And be it our care, individually, as members of society, as the friends of mankind, and as truly interested in the welfare of these kingdoms, to amend our own lives, conform to all just and equitable laws, civil and moral, as well as to laws divine; and set a noble example of true religion  
and

and genuine virtue before all men. And then, should public calamities approach, and should we stand in the midst of them, to bear our lot in the common affliction, we shall be supported by the arm of omnipotence; and if we fall a sacrifice in the general judgments, we shall be prepared for the event, and joyfully rise from a scene of sorrow, calamity, and woe upon earth, to a state of *peace, felicity, and honor, UNSPEAKABLE AND ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS!*





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